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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OUAGADOUGOU 001048

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GV](#) [UV](#)
SUBJ: GUINEA - A NEGOTIATING DEBACLE IN OUAGADOUGOU

Classified by Charge d'Affaires Dennis Hankins for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The second round on Guinean talks in Ouagadougou ended as a public relations fiasco for the Burkinabe with the CNDD claiming victory. The mediation is trying to downplay the significance of its seven point "non-paper" meant to stimulate debate but, according to the Burkinabe, inappropriately and inaccurately publicized by the two parties as a formal mediation proposal. The Burkinabe recognize that the details of the Head of State and senior leadership of any transition governments remain key to any solution with the two sides, for now, still diametrically opposed relative to the role of Dadis. Lacking leverage to impose a solution, Compaore can only wait for one or both of the two sides to give him some leeway to work with -- he may walk away from the process. The Burkinabe worry that international pressure tends more to harden Dadis' position than to force him out. End Summary

¶2. (C) Not Meant As A Mediation Proposal: Charge spoke morning of November 21 with MFA Cabinet Director Vincent Zakane concerning the second round of Burkinabe-sponsored talks on Guinea held November 18 - 21 in Ouagadougou. A clearly frustrated Zakane told Charge that neither the CNDD nor the Forces Vives had stuck to the intent of the meeting. Zakane explained that in this round, Compaore had only meant to present a seven-point "non-paper" that highlighted areas on convergence and disagreement between the position papers he had previously received from the two sides. Stressing that the paper was cleared by the UN and AU before being presented, Zakane said the paper included a section on transition modalities that was meant to serve as a discussion point - not as a mediation proposal. Zakane acknowledged that the point followed that reported in the press -- a Transition Government headed by Dadis as President with the Prime Minister coming from the Forces Vives and with the condition that the two leaders would have to resign four months before any elections should they want to present themselves as a presidential candidate. Zakane complained that neither side "played the game" of using the "non-paper" as a basis of discussion where both were to have come back with what was acceptable and what was unacceptable to them. Instead, Zakane said the CNDD was the first to break trust by releasing the paper as "the mediation proposal" that they would accept. The Forces Vives followed suit condemning the mediation for a one-sided "proposal" that ignored their fundamental interests.

¶3. (C) Mutually Exclusive Positions: Zakane stressed that Compaore is still faced with mutually exclusive positions on the fundamental issue in the crisis -- the future role of Dadis. "The CNDD refuses to discuss any option that excludes Dadis and the Force Vives refuse any option that includes him," said Zakane, who had seen the "non-paper" as a way to start discussing some concrete modalities that might generate enough movement to eventually find a solution to address this most important issue. Since "the mediation has no mechanism to force Dadis out," Zakane argued they were forced to consider options that might include him.

¶4. (C) Next Steps: Zakane told Charge that no third round of talks is currently planned. In principle, the two sides are supposed to get back to Compaore with their formal comments on the non-paper but,

Zakane noted, "the CNDD has already accepted it 100% and the Forces Vives have rejected it out of hand." Their public statements, Zakane said, "makes the mediator's task much more difficult." The Burkinabe will continue to engage the two sides to come back with substantive comments, but Zakane note that, "If they leave things the way they are, we may have to abandon our efforts and have the international community again assume its responsibilities." Zakane suggested the mediation may consider presenting a completely different formula.

¶5. (C) Is International Pressure Counterproductive? Zakane told Charge they are finding Dadis' position becoming tougher in response to international pressure. "The sanctions and, particularly, the threat of the International Criminal Court make him fearful and more and more determined to hold onto power as the only way to protect himself," Zakane opined.

¶6. (C) Comment: At minimum, the Burkinabe poorly drafted their "non-paper" in such a way that it could be used by the CNDD as support for their position. More likely, the paper accurately reflected the best Compaore thought he could achieve -- even though that leads to short term and, almost certainly, long term legitimacy for Dadis. Charge told Zakane that it seems difficult to walk back the positions stated in the "non-paper" now that it is public but that, pending official reaction from Washington, what was in the paper did not seem to offer any real confidence-building measures for the Forces Vives that could lead to an acceptable resolution of the Guinean crisis. Our sense is that Zakane and the Burkinabe had received multiple messages of concern from international partners; hence, their desire to disassociate themselves from the paper they presented. Compaore might very well abandon his efforts since he sees no way of getting Dadis out and is only opening himself up for criticism by accepting options that keep Dadis in. End Comment

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¶7. (U) Conakry Minimize Considered.

HANKINS